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## Building Code Compliance Office

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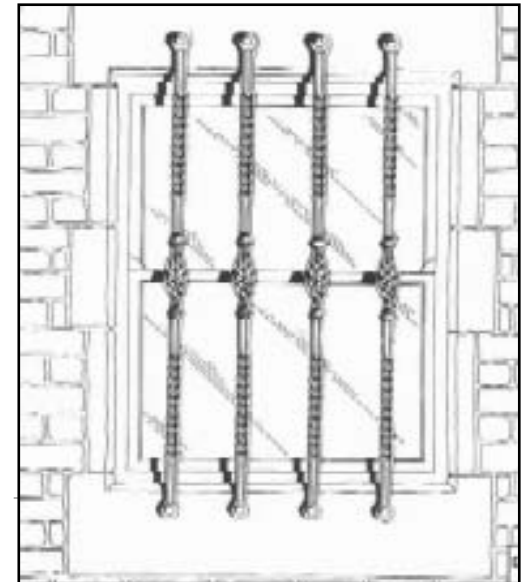
Miami-Dade County  
Building Code Compliance Office  
140 W. Flagler St. Suite 1603  
Miami, FL 33130

## MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BUILDING CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICE

*"Building Together for a Better Future"*

## The Key to Unlocking Your Responsibility for Security Bar Installation

An Industry reference



# Background

As a member of the Ornamental Iron Works industry or another license-holder whose scope of work includes the installation of security bars, you need to be aware that a Miami-Dade County Commissioner-mandated resolution passed in January 2004 affects your trade.

Miami-Dade County Commissioners Joe Martinez and Dorrin Rolle sponsored resolution R-454-04 spearheading a public awareness campaign to encourage compliance to the Florida Building Code regarding security bars and safety release devices, after a house fire killed almost an entire family.

While safety-release mechanisms for windows have been required since 1968, the Commissioners feel a public outreach campaign is needed to encourage residents to comply, so the number of deaths resulting from being trapped inside homes with non-compliant bars and windows decreases.



Security bars keep burglars out, but they may also prevent people from getting out in case of an emergency, as well as rescue workers from getting in to save lives.

This brochure refers to the appropriate sections of the Florida Building Code regarding security bars and the required safety release mechanisms.

## Florida Building Code References

### FBC Section 1005.4.5 Security Bars

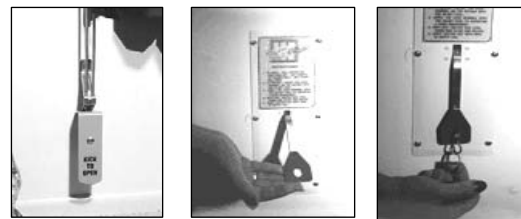
Bars, grilles, grates or similar security devices shall be permitted provided the minimum size and operational constraints of such devices are in accordance with Sections 1005.4.2, 1005.4.3 and 1005.4.4. Occupants in any part of the dwelling or dwelling unit shall be able to access the means of escape without passing through a lockable door not under their control. The means of escape shall be within the first floor of the dwelling or dwelling unit and shall not be located within a garage.

### FBC Section 1005.5 Emergency Escape

Each sleeping room or room with a required exit door in a residential occupancy that has security bars, grilles, grates or similar devices installed shall have at least one emergency escape and rescue opening.



### FBC Section 1005.4.2 Release Mechanisms

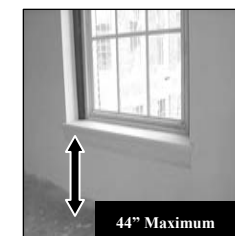
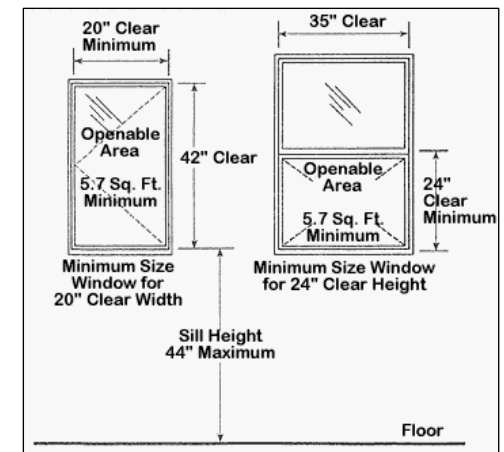


This section of the code requires that windows shall be able to open from the inside without the use of tools and shall provide a clear opening of not less than 20 inches in width, 24 inches in height and 5.7ft<sup>2</sup> in area. Every family member should be able to open a quick release security bars mechanism. Above are three examples of devices residents might choose to retrofit their bars with. At left is a quick release. At center is a pull lever and above right is a pull safety pin model.

Another portion of Code section 1005.4.2 requires the bottom of the opening shall be not more than 44 inches above the floor, and any latching device shall be capable of being operated from not more than 54 inches above the finished floor.

### FBC Section 1005.4.4 Opening Areas

The minimum net clear opening height dimension shall be 24 inches. The minimum net clear opening width dimension shall be 20 inches. The minimum net clear opening area shall be 5.7 square feet.



### FBC Section 1005.4.3

#### Height requirements

The emergency escape and rescue opening shall have a sill height of not more than 44 inches above the floor.

Visit BCCO's website which will include this information and a link that includes license-holders who are authorized of retro-fitting security bars. The website address is [www.miamidade.gov/buildingcode](http://www.miamidade.gov/buildingcode).